



DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
State of Mississippi

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For Immediate Release
May 15, 2006

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**SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF STRESS CAUSED BY HURRICANE KATRINA
AND UPCOMING HURRICANE SEASON**

Here in Mississippi, many people have suffered considerable losses due to Hurricane Katrina and are worried about the 2006 hurricane season. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health is encouraging Mississippians to be aware of the signs and symptoms of stress as the upcoming hurricane season approaches.

People feel and express their reactions to a crisis differently. Some emotional reactions include:

- Feel very nervous, helpless, fearful or angry
- Feel hopeless about the future
- Feel detached or unconcerned about others
- Feel numb and unable to experience love or joy
- Become easily upset or agitated
- Have frequent distressing dreams or memories
- Avoid people, places and things related to the disaster
- Have difficulty concentrating

How people physically react to a disaster also varies. Some physical reactions include:

- Have an upset stomach, eat too much or too little, or have gastrointestinal problems
- Experience a pounding heart, rapid breathing, sweating or severe headache when thinking about the disaster
- Have trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or sleeping too much

Sometimes people need extra help to deal with a traumatic event. People directly affected by this tragedy, young children, people who have been through other traumatic events, and people with emotional problems are more likely to need professional help.

Project Recovery, a division of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, has been developed to assist people in finding ways to cope with stress caused by Katrina. Expressing your feelings about a traumatic event like Hurricane Katrina is important.

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Page 2

Project Recovery provides free crisis counseling services through community outreach, public education and information and referral. There are no medical or financial screening methods to qualify to receive services.

Project Recovery is funded through a grant by the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and facilitated with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The Project Recovery helpline is accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For assistance, please call 1-866-856-3227.

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